

July Newsletter

Redeemer's Christian Connection

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Pastor's Page



Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Synodical Convention 2023

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, including its districts and other institutions, is governed by its member congregations, acting together through their visitation and electoral circuits, district and national conventions. Our national convention takes place this year in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from July 29 -August 3. I am the alternate pastoral delegate for the Rocky Mountain District, in case the pastor delegate, Pastor Michael Redeker, from Messiah, Grand Junction is unable to attend on behalf of the Rocky Mountain District.

The theme of this year's triennial convention is "We Preach Christ Crucified" from 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. The following, for your meditation, includes some snippets of the essays that will be presented at the convention on this theme.

In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul addressed their life in Christ. The church was marked by division, immorality, pride and the misuse of the Sacrament. Questions of idolatry and how to live properly, including marriage issues, vexed the Corinthian Christians. To all of this, Paul wrote "We preach Christ crucified." This "word of the cross" is the power of God and the wisdom of God. The convention essays will explore how the preaching of Christ crucified remains the power and wisdom of God for the redemption of the world. This truth echoes in the LCMS, her partner churches and in every witness to those around us. The church preaches Christ crucified and trusts that through the church's preaching God's power and wisdom does what He desires and promises.

We Preach Christ Crucified (by Rev. Dr. Thomas Egger) - Ancient Roman graffiti shows a man, named Alexamenos, standing before a large crucifix, with our dying Lord pictured with the head of an ass. An inscription reads, “Alexamenos worships his God.” In our day, as in days of old, Christianity is mocked and derided. The church in the West is shrinking. Our children are wandering. Our neighbors are uninterested. What can we do? We preach Christ crucified. From the creation of the world to its final gasp, this is God’s single, gracious, wise, powerful plan to save sinful humanity. Let us not grow weary or discouraged, but take up this God-given task with joy and confidence. Let us preach and publish near and far this amazing message: God’s Son, in love, has shed His blood for all!

The Power of God (by Rev. Dr. Abjar Bahkou) - When we are baptized into Christ, we are a new creature and, as a new creature, grow daily by carrying the cross and following Christ. Christianity sees the cross not as an instrument of torture, but of life that comes out of death. On the cross, people die; from it, Christ made His way back to life. This essay presents the Lutheran perspective on how to preach the power of the cross in a shame and honor culture, and it discusses the task of baptized believers in proclaiming the power of God on the cross.

The Wisdom of God (by Dr. Russell Dawn) - Christ, the wisdom of God, makes us wise unto salvation, and only in such wisdom can we truly comprehend reality and live God-pleasing lives. But as Luther warns, the devil fights against the wisdom of God, enticing us toward idolatry. This idolatry renders us fools in eternal things and causes chaos in temporal things. We see this chaos burgeoning all around us. The faithful life in the midst of idolatrous chaos is, as it always has been, to preach Christ crucified and abide at the foot of the cross as salt and light in our families, communities and societal institutions.

The Redemption of the World (by Rev. Dr. Juhana Pohjola) - “But we preach Christ crucified” (1 Cor. 1:23). This is the mission statement of St. Paul. This message, which is the wisdom and strength of God, has only one goal: to save us. What does it mean to preach the Gospel of salvation in our times? What challenges and opportunities do we have in a rapidly changing and even hostile post-Christian environment? What can we learn from St. Paul in how the Gospel of the redemption of the world is also sacramental and communal?

Share the Gospel through the 2023-2026 LCMS National Offering

Every three years, alongside the Synod convention, LCMS congregations and their members join in sharing special gifts through the LCMS National Offering.

The 2023-2026 National Offering, under the theme “We Preach Christ Crucified for All People,” will support the translation and production of meaningful Lutheran resources in languages other than English, so that all may read, hear and speak the Good News of Christ crucified in a language easily understood.

More information on how you can give personally will be on the reverse side of the Sunday Bulletin Insert starting this month

Redeemer Lutheran School & Tiny Treasures Preschool

We believe that children learn best by actively pursuing their personal interests and curiosities. Children at Redeemer Lutheran School and Tiny Treasures Preschool are encouraged to make choices about the materials they use and the activities they participate in throughout the day. As they pursue their choices and plans, children explore, ask and answer questions, solve problems and interact with other children and adults. In this environment, children naturally engage in key experiences as they involve themselves in activities that foster growth of developmentally important skills and abilities. Although children need to pursue their unique interests and curiosities, they also need to learn about important truths, especially those found in the Word of God. This summer the children will have learned about Jesus our Good Shepherd, the Parable of the Sower, Daniel in the Lion's Den, The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace, attended VBS, and wrapped up with Jonah and the Big Fish, then Jesus Calming the Storm. We also sing classic Christian children's songs to help us both learn the lessons and continue the historic Christian culture found within these wonderful songs and hymns. The other subjects that children need to learn about are reading, writing, and arithmetic. The school aged children are getting support in language skills, writing practice and math concepts that are individualized based on their Iowa Basic scores (which were awesome by the way). The preschool children are continuing to advance at their unique pace in all the foundational skills around phonics, printing and numerals. Finally, a few dates to remember: NO school the week of the Fourth of July (July 3-7). Vacation Bible School is July 10-13 in the mornings. Students attending Redeemer Lutheran School in the fall (Kindergarten through 6th grade) start school on Monday, August 14 at 8:15 a.m. The last day of the summer session for preschoolers is Friday, August 18. There is NO preschool the week of August 21-25 and the preschoolers start again on Monday, August 28th.



What About Christian Stewardship

Christian stewardship is one of those areas to which we really do not give adequate attention. Unfortunately, at times when stewardship is discussed it is done from the perspective of the Law, not the Gospel. In fact, it may well be that a number of people think that stewardship is only about raising funds for the church's budget. That is genuinely unfortunate, for, as we shall see, Christian stewardship is much more than this.

To fully appreciate the privilege we have of being Christian stewards, we need to return to those bedrock truths of the Christian faith so that we will continually live in appreciation of the glorious truths of God's Word, truths that set us free for lives of Christian stewardship.

Why are we here?

The age-old question is this, "Why am I here?" We need to admit that sometimes our answer goes something like this, "I am here in order to accumulate as many things as I possibly can in order to have a successful life. I work to earn money to buy more things."

But the real answer to that question is found in the first book of the Bible, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:27). We are here because we are God's creation.

There was perfect and complete harmony between human beings and God. He created mankind to be in perfect fellowship with Him, reflecting His glory. He wanted this perfect relationship to continue forever.

What went wrong?

When Adam and Eve fell into sin, the beautiful relationship God intended them to have with Him was destroyed through their sinful rebellion against Him. "In Adam all die" (1Cor.15:22). To this very day and hour this fall impacts all areas of life.

From the moment of our conception we are sinful (Ps.51:5). By nature, every thought and imagination of human beings from their childhood is evil continually (Gen. 8:21).

Human beings, as they come into this world, are at war with God (Rom. 8:7), and "alienated from the life of God" through the ignorant blindness of their sinful condition (Eph.4:18).

That is the most fundamental challenge and problem we face in regard to Christian stewardship. Ever since the fall into sin, human beings are always turned in upon themselves, with lives that revolve around what they want, what they need, and what they are concerned about.

Believers are constantly fighting against the old sinful flesh that wants to pull them back into these old patterns of thought and action.

How did God deal with our greatest need?

God promised to send a Savior when Adam and Eve fell (Gen.3:15).When the time had come, God sent His Son into our world, to live perfectly under His Law, and to be the perfect atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world (Gal. 4:4, 5). By His innocent suffering and bitter death, our Lord Jesus Christ opened to us the gates of paradise.

By the shedding of His holy, precious blood, Jesus has cleansed you from all of your sin—all of it, not just some of it—all of it. You are forgiven. Your debt is paid. In Christ, you have become a new creation. He has opened all the doors that sin had closed (Is.59:2).

He has pulled us out of destruction and made us new creatures to live under Him in His kingdom, serving Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness. We are saved from eternal damnation and saved for an eternity of life with God that begins right here and now.

The source and strength of Christian stewardship is the blood-bought salvation that is so richly and daily given us in Christ. We are given a new purpose in life and a new hope. We are given new hearts and renewed minds. We are set on a new path of life. We are freed from our former slavery to sinful patterns of thought and action.

Having been saved redeemed and forgiven by our good and gracious God, we now live in the reality of that salvation. We realize that life is not just about us, but about God's will for us. We live now in the awareness that all things belong to God. We are called to be stewards of those things God has entrusted to us.

What is the steward's highest priority?

Luke 19:11–27 is the parable of the talents. Take a few moments to read this parable. Here our Lord clearly indicates how He wishes us to be stewards of His precious Gospel, the good news of salvation that is ours in Christ. Jesus told this parable as He was on His way to Jerusalem for the final time in His earthly life. He knew that soon He would no longer be present visibly with His disciples.

God has given us the soul-saving and life-changing Gospel through Word and Sacraments. These Gospel-treasures are to be guarded, defended and preserved, as Jude 3 makes clear. We are not, however, simply to bury these treasures; instead we are to make good use of them!

Christian stewards use the treasure of the Gospel in their own lives by faithfully gathering every Sunday around the Word and Sacraments. There they receive the life and strength and hope and power that makes Christian stewardship possible. We gather regularly with other Christians to study the Bible so we can grow in our understanding and knowledge about God's Holy Word. And having so gathered around Word and Sacraments, we then are ready to "invest" these treasures.

Stewards don't just bury this treasure, they put it to work! This is our sacred trust and responsibility. Christ wants us to share the saving Gospel He has committed to our trust, so that with it and through it, others may be won for Him for all eternity (Mark 5:19–20). He died for all (2 Cor.5:15) and it is His will that none should perish, but that all should be brought to repentance and faith (2 Peter 3:9).

As Christian stewards joyfully use the greatest gift of all—the Gospel given through Word and Sacrament—they will find that priorities in their life change and take on a new perspective.

No longer do they find themselves living only for themselves. Rather, they recognize they are part of the most exciting and wonderful life possible—life with God and life in service to Him for the sake of others. St. Paul puts it so beautifully when he writes in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me."

How do Christian stewards use their material blessings?

The money that we have and all the things that we own—all of them are God's possessions. Everything in this life that we have is a sacred trust from our heavenly Father (Hag. 2:8; Lev.25:23; Ps.50:10ff). Everything belongs to God. He allows us to use His creation and intends it for our good.

The Apostle Paul puts matters quite clearly when he writes, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). Because this is true, we need to realize that those things we have are not ours to use in any way we choose.

When we talk about Christian stewardship then, we are talking about a "big picture" view of how we manage and use all that our good and gracious God has given to us, and that certainly includes money. Some have more, some have less, but all have the privilege, duty and responsibility to give sacrificially for the work of the Kingdom. Clearly then, it is our joyful privilege and sacred duty to support the work of the church through our financial offerings. We give too of our time and our talents in the work of the church, giving as we have received and sharing as we have been blessed.

We do this in order that the message of Christ and the truth of His Word is spread abroad, through our own personal efforts, and through the efforts of our congregation and our District, and our Synod, as together we join hands to reach out boldly with the Gospel—telling the good news of Jesus.

Conclusion

When we catch the vision of Christian stewardship that flows from a Christ-centered and Gospel-centered understanding of God's Word, we are able to put issues of our wealth and possessions in proper perspective. They are not "ends" but "means." They are the means by which our Lord provides for our needs and the means by which He permits us to join hands with fellow believers in supporting generously the work of the church in reaching out with the message of forgiveness, life and salvation in Christ.

How much can we give? How much are we to give? We do not live under law, but under grace. Each of us needs prayerfully to determine what is most appropriate for your own situation. Many Christians have found giving a fixed percent of their income to be the best way to be regular in their giving.

Because of what Christ has done, we are called to lives of Christian stewardship—lives that reflect the glory of God. Christian stewards are privileged by God to live their lives in grateful praise and thanksgiving to God, reflecting this marvelous truth from God's almighty Spirit-filled Word:

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich"(2 Cor.8:9).



Kids T-Rex Race



Scan QR code for race entry form

Age 7-15 years—\$15

Saturday, July 22, 2023 Main Street

9:35am (BEFORE THE DELTARADO DAYS PARADE)

For more details Contact Janell Oberheu at janelloberheu@gmail.com 970-778-1134

Or visit www.redeemerlutherschool.org

Birthdays

Tim Hinz—July 1
John Realph—July 3
Brenda Moseman—July 5
Michael Miller—July 6
Ayla Kruger—July 6
Jo Ann Wilks—July 7
Eric Egan—July 11
Norm Sunderland—July 12
Al Buchman—July 14
Casey Bieth—July 15
Pastor VanFossan—July 19
Everett Tunget—July 20
Brooks Oberheu—July 21
Joey Gates—July 22
Joseph Cumins—July 22
Madyson Scarborough—July 24
Eileen Mertens—July 24
Joshua Heinecke—July 25
Heather della Volpe—July 26
William Steinbach—July 27
Regina Howell—July 27
Sheri Gates—July 28

Baptismal Birthdays

Bobbi Koppes—July 1
Paul Althaus—July 2
Linda Wacker—July 8
Brenda Moseman—July 8
Thomas Howell—July 9
Michael Miller—July 10
Sarah Weber—July 14
Jace Holden—July 14
Dave Burgess—July 15
Bill Sinner—July 21
Beth Gilleece—July 22
Tim Hinz—July 30

Wedding Anniversaries

Paul & Sharon Althaus—July 2
Joshua & Alissa Heinecke—July 21

THE LORD'S MINISTRY

Redeemer Lutherans attendance figures and financial blessings that were given for the month of June to further maintain the Lord's ministry.

Date	Attendance	Communicants	Offerings Received	Needed Operating Budget
6 - 4 - 2023	82	68	\$4,040.00/\$640.50	\$4,455.06
6 - 11 - 2023	93	76	\$3,024.75/\$414.75	\$4,455.06
6 - 18 - 2023	87	66	\$3,258.75/\$29.95	\$4,455.06
6 - 25 - 2023	110	90	\$5,219.75/\$1,457.50	\$4,455.06



Life Thoughts in the Church Year

July 2 – Pentecost V (Proper 8A) – Far from freedom and the opposite of autonomy, death-dealing measures like abortion and assisted suicide hold hearts captive to sinful passions (Romans 7:5-6) such as pride and lust. The sanctity of life Gospel brings the sword that truly liberates (Matthew 10:34) “so that you may belong to another” (Romans 7:4). The Heavenly Father holds every human life as His own precious treasure.

July 9 – Pentecost VI (Proper 9A) – Neighbors struggling with surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis long for hope and rest. The Lord God Almighty promises His gifts of life come with relief (Matthew 11:28) and rejoicing (Zechariah 9:9). How can we remain silent and deny them the very blessings we’ve received? Let us take up the privilege of commending life’s goodness and God’s greatness one generation to another (Psalm 145:4).

July 16 – Pentecost VII (Proper 10A) – Celebrating every human being as gift and privilege sometimes meets with resistance. This doesn’t mean the message failed. Good ground may lie beneath an unsightly surface. Our patient Savior often slowly softens soil, and seeds take time to germinate and flower. The sanctity of life carries God’s message, not ours, and He guarantees His strong Word never goes to waste (Isaiah 55:10-11).

July 23 – Pentecost VIII (Proper 11A) – The people of God dare not confuse weeds with wheat. His Word clearly distinguishes His gifts from counterfeits. For our neighbor’s sake and our own, we must recognize the enemy’s doings (Matthew 13:27-28). Abortion, embryocide, and euthanasia are the devil’s deceptions. Jesus Christ alone decides life and death for us (Isaiah 44:6), and His timing never withholds any bounties or glories (Romans 8:18).

July 30 – Pentecost IX (Proper 12A) – Our Lord loves to take the tiniest as His treasured possession (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). Their insufficiencies only accentuate how great is His compassion (Psalm 125:2). “Little ones to Him belong, they are weak but He is strong.” Does this include gestating embryos and unborn babies? Does it include bodies limited by age or ailment? Yes, Jesus loves them just as much as He loves me.